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DEPARTMENT OF
GAME AND FISHERIES

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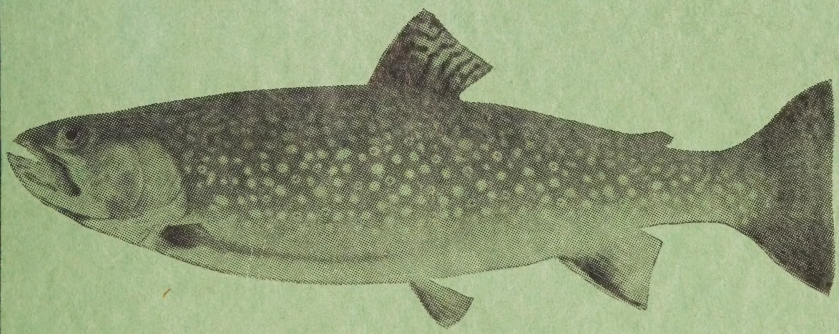

SPECKLED TROUT

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Minister

D. J. TAYLOR
Deputy Minister

DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISHERIES
TORONTO - ONTARIO

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Editorial

A FEW years ago there was in vogue a small device in the form of a top with hexagonal sides. On each of the sides was one of two words, either "put" or "take". In effect it was a simple gambling device. The player spun the top with a flip of his fingers and when the top had ceased to spin it rolled over on one of its many sides exposing to view one or other of the fatal words "put" or "take". It was a game with elastic possibilities, but the essential feature was that everything taken from the pot had first of all to be put in, and every time a player exercised his right to "take" it was necessary to renew stakes.

Life is a game of "put" and "take"; a mild gamble with unknown and unforeseen hazards which may spell success or failure; and it is certain we shall take nothing worth while out of it, unless we make a definite contribution on our own behalf.

What the sportsman continues to take from the wildlife field will depend upon what he is prepared to put into it. Conservation is a co-operative endeavour in which all must play their part. It is not a negative policy which prohibits take, for it is based primarily upon wise use, and it is this factor which necessitates co-operation. Game and fish are self-renewing resources, but unlimited take would ultimately destroy the power to reproduce. Protective laws and administrative policies are intended to forestall such a danger while restocking is intended to secure the take at a more or less constant level.

The sportsman is expected to assist in keeping the pot replenished by making a personal contribution to the success of every conservation measure intended to guard his sport. He can do this by observing the laws himself and by making it less easy for others to break them; by co-operating with the enforcement officers to the same end; by avoiding waste and by restricting his take to his immediate personal needs, within the limits set by law. These are conservation measures of importance from the standpoint of those who love to spin the recreational top which represents the sports of fishing and hunting.

PUT — and — TAKE; for "As ye sow so shall ye reap!"

Departmental History (continued)

ENFORCEMENT

It is in the matter of enforcement that the greatest forward steps have been taken. Early attempts at law enforcement were of the hit and miss variety due to the fact that no permanent officers were employed and those who had any authority were mostly dependent upon the moiety of fines which they received when a conviction was secured. From the report of the Game and Fish Commission of 1892 we glean this illuminating statement: "Our wardens are paid a nominal salary of forty dollars a year, and not wishing to incur the ill-will of neighbors, they very wisely pocket the forty dollars a year and do nothing. There is no protection and it simply arises from the fact that it has been everybody's business and nobody's business in particular to enforce the laws."

From the first Annual Report upon the working of the Fisheries Branch for the year ending December 31st, 1898, we cull this information: "Ninety-four Overseers have been appointed at salaries ranging from $25.00 to $300.00. The plan of protection is in the main that adopted by the Federal Government, except that in that portion of the Province where the duty of the Overseers is chiefly one of supervision, five District Overseers have also been appointed at salaries ranging from $300.00 to $600.00 per annum, whose whole time is expected to be devoted to duties. With perhaps a few exceptions, the Overseers have been exceedingly vigilant and faithful, taking into consideration the very small allowance which a majority of them receive and the large area of territory which each has to supervise." By 1905 the number of Overseers had increased to 156, but the district supervising Overseers had been dispensed with and the salaries now ranged from $25.00 to $400.00 per annum. The reason for dispensing with the supervisors whose salaries and expenses amounted to $4,125.00 per year was because it was considered that the amount paid "may be better expended in the payment of salaries of additional overseers, and in increasing the efficiency of the patrol service."

It is rather doubtful if this system of appointing a large number of what must of necessity have been part time workers was a successful experiment. According to the Annual Report for 1899, these men figured out the time they could afford to spend on enforcement work for the compensation they received, and when they had put in the necessary hours sat back and waited for something to turn up. A District Overseer reporting on this phase of the matter said that "in several instances where he has called to duty an Overseer, he (the Overseer) invariably claims that he has already spent considerable time, and that it is impossible for him to neglect the work he may be at, but if any person will send in information he will be pleased to prosecute." Obviously the set-up was quite unsatisfactory for protection is a full time job calling for constant vigilance on the part of those whose duty it is to enforce the laws.

The total amount paid for salaries and expenses of the enforcement officers in 1905 was $15,875.73; the amount expended for the same purpose in 1944 was $206,375.40.

The system of part-time Overseers was in effect until 1920 — although in the interim District Supervisors were again appointed — when a general re-organization was undertaken under the direction of the Hon. F. C. Biggs, Minister of the Department. The part-time officers were replaced by full time Overseers, and the change, according to the report was expected to afford a greater measure of protection to the resources. That this new organization has proved its value over a period of years is a matter of record and general knowledge. There are some 135 of these permanent Overseers employed and they are assisted in their work by hundreds of Deputy Game Wardens, and the members of the Provincial Police. The list of convictions obtained and seizures made by these officers over a period of years is an extensive one, while the fines and revenue from seizures make an impressive total.

These men, of necessity, cover a large territory of land and water. Regular patrols are made to all areas under their jurisdiction, although, for the better carrying out of their duties, and so that the element of surprise is ever present, this is not done on any set schedule. Reports of each day's activities are regularly made to the Department, and it is always possible to check on the work of any officer. They are, for the most part, vigilant in carrying out their duties, as the law-breakers have good reason to know. To add to the dignity of their job, and identify them with the work they are doing, each officer is provided with a suitable uniform.

It will be evident that this branch of the service is a most important one because it has to do with law enforcement, which in turn implies the protection of the resources. It has made great progress since those early days when, as previously related, the appointees pocketed their meagre remuneration and did nothing!

Wildlife and Modern Transportation

"It takes no seer to visualize that increased transportation systems mean the eventual spread of highways into many areas, which because of their remoteness, have been more or less reservoirs for the production of wildlife in comparative security. Likewise, the devlopment of large air bases, supplemented by smaller landing fields, means the eventual development of fast transportation service by air to the most remote sections of the continent.

Distances will no longer be the barrier in protecting wildlife that they have been in the past. Plans for super highways to supplement the existing road systems and plans for airfields to be located all over the face of the continent are already in existence.

Such a development program cannot fail to have profound effects upon the wildlife and fishery resources of the country. Whether those effects

are good or bad will depend to a considerable extent upon the alertness, intelligence and energy of the conservation forces of the Nation." (Extract from an article by Dr. Ira N. Gabrillson.)

With An Eye To The Future

Ontario sportsmen have always enjoyed a great deal of freedom in connection with the taking of game and fish. In the early days regulations were practically non-existant and bag limits deemed unnecessary. Wildlife was extremely abundant and as a consequence it was taken with a recklessness which could not but have a serious effect on the future supply. The prodigality of this period has been frequently referred to. Personal indulgences were more or less unrestrained and the commercial sale of game was rife. Such a situation could not long exist without having an adverse effect upon the resources, and it soon became apparent that measures of control would be necessary if a valuable heritage was to be preserved.

One of the earliest laws, enacted in 1821, established a Close Season on deer between January 10th and July 1st. It will be obvious that the legal hunting period between July 1st and January 10th was still excessive and as there is no mention of bag limits it must be assumed that there was much unnecessary killing. Eighteen years later the Act was amended to open the season on August 1st, and extend it to February 1st which, in the light of modern knowledge, would not appear to afford much relief to the deer.

In connection with other species of game the same generous conditions prevailed and it was apparent that the spirit of the times was one of thoughtless destruction with little regard to the future.

This situation continued for many years with the inevitable result. There was a very noticeable deterioration in the quantity of big game while upland game was suffering from general misuse. In 1868, restrictions were still further tightened. The deer, elk, moose and caribou seasons were reduced from six to three months, while the open seasons for small game were also curtailed. Sale of game was restricted to fourteen days after the close of the season.

In those early days there were some restrictions covering the taking of fish, but the seasons were long and there were no limits of take. As a result of these generous conditions, fish were subjected to the same unwise extravagance which characterized the sporting activities of that period.

As the years passed men became more conscious of wildlife values and it was evident that a greater measure of control was necessary in order to check waste and promote development of the resources. Progressive legislation was introduced from time to time under various administrations, which had the effect of shortening the Open Seasons, introducing bag limits and generally restricting sporting activities in a manner calculated to afford protection and control. This phase of administrative policy

has kept pace with modern demands and such restrictions as are in effect today are based on practical experience and scientific knowledge acquired over a long period of years.

This brief review of the conditions leading up to the present regulations is introduced in order to acquaint the sportsman with the fact that the problems of protection and control are no less pressing today than they were half a century ago. As a matter of fact the post war years promise to introduce a new era of travel and recreation which will demand further restrictions upon the sportsman, if we are to continue to enjoy the standard of fishing and hunting which the extent of our resources have led us to expect.

Modern means of transportation, — railways, aeroplanes, and extended highways, — will mean greater facilities for ever increasing numbers of people to seek recreation and adventure. Post war economic plans visualize a greatly increased influx of tourist visitors, while residents of the Province will be enabled to enjoy travel and outdoor sport in larger numbers than ever before, because of the change from war to peace and compulsory vacations from industry. This means that the game and fish resources will be heavily taxed, and that the increased facilities for travel will open up to the public a great deal of heretofore inaccessible territory. This territory is and has been a reservoir of supply, in so far as game is concerned, while its virgin waters have proved a background of permanency and security in an age of reckless indulgence. For these reasons, among others, there is an absolute need for certain further restrictions designed to take care of increasing demands. Some of these changes will probably prove irksome to many of the old-timers who for years have loved the freedom which, more or less, unlimited facilities for hunting have afforded them. Knowing the circumstances however, and the need to protect as well as develop the resources in the face of an ever growing sporting population, it is believed that these will be accepted with good grace and in a spirit of co-operation.

Mention has been made of the increasing number of sportsmen who now take advantage of the fishing and hunting for which the Province is noted, and it may therefore be of interest to offer some figures bearing on this fact. In the case of resident anglers it is not possible to give figures, because no license is required and there is therefore no check. The trend of the times, however, may well be gauged by the figures relating to non-resident anglers. In 1935 — basing the family license on an average of 2½ persons — there were approximately 48,000 non-residents angling in the Province. In 1945 the number had increased to 171,000.

Ten years ago there were approximately 2,000 non-resident hunters; in 1945 the number had increased to almost 10,000.

Substantiating the fact that the general increase extends to resident sportsmen in equally large proportions, it is noted that in 1935, residents purchased 106,638 gun licenses. In 1945 the number of licenses sold was 181,000.

In 1935 there were approximately 20,000 resident deer and moose hunters; last year the number exceeded 55,000.

There is no question in regard to this great increase; the figures provide the proof and these are to be found in departmental records: It is safe to say that the increase will be even more rapid in the next few years.

To offset the heavy demand which this tremendous army of sportsmen will make upon the fish and game resources of the Province, Nature must have the aid not only of those who administer the resources but also of those who participate in the sports which they make possible. This is an important factor in the conservation programme and only through the co-operation of all concerned will there be any assurance of success in maintaining a supply to meet the demand. As an initial step towards that end, new Legislation will be found in the Statutes this year, some of which will have the effect of placing further restraint upon many of us who have enjoyed a great deal of freedom in the past, particularly in the hunting field. These additional restrictions are absolutely necessary if we are to continue to enjoy good big game hunting in the future.

Let us continue to accept our personal responsibility for the protection of the resources realizing that restraint is necessary to success and wise use the basis of every conservation measure.

Protect The Minnows

The Dominion Fishery Regulations as they apply to the Province of Ontario provide for the taking of minnows and other small fishes —except the young of commercial and game fish — for bait, and also define the means by which they may be taken. Most anglers are familiar with the dip-net and minnow-trap used for the purpose of procuring minnows. Very few, however, give much thought to the part which minnows play in the growth of our game fish or the necessity for affording them protection from unnecessary waste. The average angler is concerned mostly with the fish he is seeking and is content when his desire in this regard is satisfied. However, it is pointed out that the big fish is the product of a food chain of which the humble minnow forms a not un-important part.

That big bass which gave you such a thrill owed its growth and development in large part to the minnows and other forage fish. The minnows in turn feed upon small water insects and crustaceons, while the insects and crustaceons feed on the microscopic plant and animal life in the water. Ascend the chain from the lowest form of life and you reach the bass, and it is almost certain that without an adequate supply of this class of food the bass would not survive.

Nature has provided a wide distribution of forage fish and an extensive variety of minnows. It is not our purpose to attempt to describe, even the common varieties, but rather to emphasize their importance in the development of our fish resources.

As a means of identification it is pointed out by the "Missouri Conservationist" that a minnow can usually be distinguished from the young of a game fish by the fact that it has in all cases a single dorsal fin at or near the centre of the back. This fin is made up entirely of soft rays. If the fin has spines the chances are it is a game fish or the young of some other species.

Occupying as it does an important place in the food chain of our game fish, it is essential that minnows should receive consideration in any scheme to conserve the resources. This involves protection for the complete food chain of which the minnow forms a part. Naturally environment takes a foremost place in this protection. Waters must be kept free from pollution and excessive floods. Neither fish nor plant-life will long survive if the waters are defiled, and raging torrents will wash away both plant and animal life.

The provision for using the minnow as bait is one which is appreciated by countless thousands of anglers, and for this reason the privilege should be safeguarded against waste. Too often the loss through the minnow pail is excessive and unnecessary. The tendency is to overload the pail and forget to give it the attention it requires, resulting in heavy loss. The cumulative effect of this practice repeated over and over again is very harmful because as has been intimated the development of fish life is dependant upon an adequate food supply.

It has been brought to our attention that a number of northern lakes are becoming heavily stocked with perch and other pan fish to the detriment of the native game fish. It is alleged that these species are being introduced in large measure by means of the minnow pail. In other words the minnows, or other small fish, are obtained in one body of water to be used as bait and taken to another lake, where, after having served their purpose, the survivors are released. This, of course, is contrary to the Special Fishery Regulations governing the use of minnows, which is as follows:

> "It shall be unlawful to liberate live minnows and other small fishes to any waters excepting those from which they were originally taken."

Observance of this regulation will help to prevent the introduction of non-native species, to waters for which they are not suited, or in which they may prove detrimental to the prevailing species.

A Perpetual Struggle

"America's most dangerous enemy, a Government report shows, has no army, navy or air force. The Government annually spends many millions of dollars waging a war against insects — which cause damage mounting into hundreds of millions of dollars each year. It is a war for survival of the human race against an ever-threatening encroachment of plant pests. Any let down in this warfare makes past efforts practically

worthless and calls for redoubled efforts in the future. Insects can multiply so fast under conditions favourable to them that a comparatively small number soon restore their ranks."

(Pennyslvania Game News.)

The above was written before the world became so heavily charged with TNT and atomic energy and before the threat to the United States was consummated at Pearl Harbour. This stab at the American way of life and the future of democratic nations throughout the world was never more intense or real than when the attempt was made by the totalitarian nations to dominate the world. The Japs and the Germans were most dangerous enemies; their preparations had been long and complete and their modus operandi both cunning and unscrupulous. An enemy who strikes without warning and kills without scruple must be considered a dangerous enemy. Yet the spirit of a nation geared to war is less likely to suffer permanently from such an attack than it is from the perpetual ravages of the forces of nature led by instinct and guided only by the desire to live. In the former case force can be met by greater strength with some assurance of success, but only constant vigil and the application of such measures of control as will keep the enemy in subjugation will save a nation from disaster from the insidious attacks against its lifeline by the forces of Nature.

The war against insects is a continuous struggle to prevent the destruction of material resources vital to man's existence, and yet its ramifications are too little understood and its potentialities too often overlooked. Quietly but effectively labour and science have combined to blast the enemy from his dugouts and trenches and prevent any big scale attacks. For the most part this is accomplished by the use of poisons, destructive to insect life but unharmful to humans. These are sprayed on fruit and vegetable crops before harm can be done, while valuable timber stands are being protected by the same means. Other defence measures are adopted to meet the widespread assaults which threaten almost every phase of agriculture, and its allied developments.

It is a peculiar fact that while Nature is responsible for this dangerous and persistent attacking force, she has also provided a highly effective army of defenders to help keep it in restraint. Birds, mammals, reptiles and even some insects are allied with man in the fight which must continually be waged for the right to live.

Depredations by uncontrolled insect forces might conceivably destroy man's lifeline so effectively as to cause definite hardship by overrunning his domain. While he retains the initiative however, and continues to provide necessary defensive measures, the ravages of nature should be kept within reasonable bounds. A controlled fire offers few hazards, but a fire left to its own resources is a dangerous enemy. So it is with the insect menace.

Says the Wyoming Wild Life: "Granted that insects thrive on our increased agriculture, that in spite of the gain in insect control our losses

continue to increase with the advance of agriculture; granted that they act as hosts to many dangerous pathogens. We must not forget that insects are agents of pollination for many flowers, and hence are responsible for many fruits and vegetables; that, still more basic, insects and their allies play a vital role in the formation of soil. Hence we must live with insects in general, while attempting to control or eradicate those dangerous to our food economy and public health."

This matter of controlling insect depredations must be handled with care for many related factors are involved, and the indiscriminate use of destructive forces might conceivably result in disturbing the economy which is man's existence. Control however is vital to our way of life, and while man continues to provide the necessary safeguards there need be no effective challenge to his right to "Dominion over the creatures."

A Much Maligned Animal

Ever and anon some excited — frequently exasperated — feminine voice calls the Department to enquire the best way to get rid of a skunk which has had the audacity to take up residence under the house, and threatens by its very proximity to disrupt the family life of an otherwise peaceful home. It is not so much that the skunk is doing any particular harm in the private "dugout" it has preempted, but simply because of the evil reputation it has inherited. To the average urban dweller the skunk is a most undesirable little vagrant, either to have under the house, or to meet up with on an afternoon stroll in the country. His reputation is bad and his near presence creates quite a furore in the breast of the city dweller. The very name has become synonymous with all that is foul and when applied to a human is the lowest form of verbal chastisement.

Much of this reputation, however, is quite undeserved. It is true that in its own defence the skunk is capable of emitting a most effective spray, the odour from which is both pungent and obnoxious. It saturates the atmosphere in the immediate vicinity and if one happens to be in the direct line of fire one's sense of smell will be seriously outraged, and the memory will not be readily forgotten. Having admitted so much, however, let us be fair and add that the skunk is merely defending himself as Nature intended he should. If left to himself, he has the good sense to mind his own business,—even if, in his general demeanour, he appears haughty and unafraid, — and, contrary to public belief does not go around seeking to inflict upon poor helpless humans the torment which his latent powers make possible. It is only when attacked, and in the last extremity that he resorts to this disagreeable method of self defence.

We are not disposed to offer any infallible method by which the inexperienced may remove the skunk from his dugout without arousing his sense of injustice or the likelihood of reprisal. According to some of our exchanges, however, there are certain "holds" which, if judiciously applied, will render him hors de combat, so to speak. The following from the Missouri Conservationist illustrates the popular notion but as will be

noted is far from positive. "A call for help came when a skunk got into the basement of a building. Fortunately a fur hunter was on the scene and voluteered to remove the skunk. He picked it up by the tail and put it into a sack without causing any unnecessary scent. I had heard that this could be done, but this was the first time I ever saw it." The Editor of the same publication comments: "We once saw that trick tried — with disastrous results."

From an article in Michigan Conservation we find some confirmation of the Missouri Editor's fears and a couple of additional suggestions which appear to have some merit. They are as follows: "There is an old story that the way to deal with a skunk is to rush boldly in and pick him up by the tail. I wouldn't do that. The skunk will twist around, clamp onto your arm, sink its teeth, and eventually get you in its sights for a gas attack. There is a safe way to do it. If the animal is in a box trap, cover up the trap with a couple of burlap sacks, dump the skunk into a third bag, then let him crawl slowly out of the bag while you hold him flat to the ground by the base of the tail and the back of the neck. The party of the second part can then be picked up as in the illustration. (Not reproduced Ed.) Skunks can be trapped, ear-tagged and liberated with no discharge of the scent glands if it is properly done. They can likewise be pulled out of dens. In reaching into a dark hole for a skunk, about the first thing you will feel is the animal's tail curving stiffly up over its back. Don't be too violent, but get hold of that tail and put it down over the anal opening. Then pry the skunk's feet loose and pull him out. He will bite. In fact he has been biting all the while, but if you have prudently worn a pair of leather mittens, he will chew the mitten and you can keep your fingers out of the way."

We knew it wasn't as easy as throwing a net over a dog, or kicking the cat out of the way, but with the necessary nerve and courage it can be done. The main thing to remember is to grasp the skunk by the tail pressing down to shut off the anal glands, while at the same time retaining a firm grip on the back of the neck to prevent it from swinging clear. For the inexperienced it might be advisable to try a less strenuous method of getting rid of one of these unwelcome visitors, or if practical, enlist the services of an experienced trapper.

The skunk is not looked upon with a great deal of favour by the farmer or the sportsman. The former accuses it of pilfering in his poultry yard, the latter berates it for destroying upland game birds in which he is interested. Both probably have justification for their accusations. On the other hand scientists who have made exhaustive studies, both biological and otherwise, have come to the conclusion that his activities are not wholly destructive to man, that indeed, he has a sphere of usefulness of some interest to the farmer. These investigations show that his food is quite diversified, but that he has a preference for insects and small mammals, with birds, fruit and vegetables occupying a lesser place in the daily menu. A comprehensive study made in California some years ago of over 1,000 skunk stomachs from nearly 100 localities and continuing over a

period of several years produced the following percentage figures representing food in bulk found in the stomachs: insects 38.5%, mammals 28.6%, birds 5.8%, parisitic worms 4.4%, cultivated fruit 2%, wild fruit 2%, incidental waste materials 19.1%, amphibians .13% and the balance probably unidentified.

It is true that if the opportunity presents itself the skunk is not above petty pilfering around the barnyard, and his appetite no doubt extends to the eggs of game birds when such are available, yet, as is pointed out, these form a very small part of his diet. The insects and small rodents he consumes in such quantities make him an aid to the farmer, and might well be balanced against his minor depredations in determining his position in the field of predators.

The fur of the skunk has considerable value. In the Province of Ontario during the season ending March, 1944, some 79,298 pelts were taken by licensed trappers, and these represented an estimated return to the trappers of $186,350.00.

The fur is mostly used in the less expensive coats which "milady" demands. It makes up nicely, is quite attractive, and has the added advantage of being extremely durable.

To Feed or Not To Feed

Recently we reprinted an article from the Colorado Conservation Comments showing the effects of winter feeding of deer with the ordinary cattle fodder. Herewith we reproduce a further article from the same publication which effectively answers the question "to feed or not to feed"? — Editor.

The winter of 1943-44 was the first winter in a dozen years that Colorado did not carry on a program of regular deer feeding. Incidentally it was the first year in the same number of years that more deer didn't die in the State of malnutrition than were killed by hunters. In fact the winter loss was negligible in spite of the fact that Colorado had one of the latest springs on record, with late snows and weather that would have piled the old fashioned feeding grounds high with dead deer to be hauled and burned by the thousands. The previous year, with a much milder spring, nearly 2,600 head of deer were piled up and burned on the Gunnison feed grounds alone. (By the time snows subsided and the work could be done, the hides and meat were so spoiled they were valueless.)

People ask why we didn't quit feeding deer long ago. Of course the answer is that public pressure in favor of feeding was so intense that the demand could not be resisted. The first real test of not feeding deer was made two years ago when the Game and Fish Department decided to experiment in one small area. They chose a district east of Glenwood Springs where about sixty per cent of the herd had died on the feed grounds the previous winter. In spite of a harder winter than the preceeding one and a deluge of protest against the experiment, the winter

closed with the loss of only three animals in the herd. Two of these were apparently killed by coyotes and the third died of a wound inflicted during the hunting season.

As a result of these experiments it has become the policy of the Colorado Game and Fish Department not to feed deer during any normal type of winter.

It is now recognized by all game management specialists that there is no type of artificial feeding yet known that is adequate as a sustained diet for deer. The deer is essentially a browser and thrives on no other type of diet. Browse consists of the living stems and leaves and buds of bushy vegetation and apparently contains elements that seem to be absolutely essential to his welfare. No one has been able to answer the question as to just what the essential element is, but it is evident that God made the deer a specialist in his feeding habits.

What's In A Name

"You know Clear Lake", asked an enthusiastic angler, bent on telling us a tale of the big one that got away. We nodded by way of answer. "Well", he continued, "we were fishing in the channel close to the island at the southern end"—"Wait a minute", we interrupted, "There's no island at the south end of Clear Lake, in fact there are no islands on the lake." An argument ensued as a result of which we found we were discussing two different bodies of water with the same name. Arising out of this little controversy we made a partial investigation and elicited some interesting facts.

In the first place, believe it or not, we have found some 33 Clear Lakes in the Province, a total which is still short of that which distinguishes Long Lake, of which there are at least 35. Bass Lake would appear to be an appropriate name for good bass-fishing waters, there are at least 15 such. We have also located 14 Loon Lakes, 13 Beaver Lakes and 11 Deer Lakes. This duplication of names is very general and of course is not unexpected in view of the size of the Province and the tremendous water area which is included in its far flung boundaries. Most of these names are of local origin, and are for the most part both descriptive and picturesque.

Colour names are very popular. There are Black Lakes, White Lakes, Blue Lakes, Green Lakes, Golden Lakes, Silver Lakes — not to speak of Crystal Lakes, in profusion.

Christian names are very common and these include both sexes. They probably represent both romance and adventure. Here are a few: Nellie Lake, Mary Lake, Mary Jane Lake, Eva Lake, Sophie's Lake, Marion Lake, Minerva Lake, Ruth Lake, etc., and, typical of those representing the male sex, are, Joe's Lake, John's Lake, Johnnie's Lake, Jack's Lake, Joseph's Lake and Bob's Lake, etc.

Generalizing for a moment we find there are Deep Lakes and Shallow Lakes, Big Lakes, Long Lakes and Little Lakes, Gravel Lakes, Stoney

Lakes and Sand Lakes, with an assortment of Crane Lakes, Deer Lakes, Duck Lakes, Eagle Lakes, Fish Lakes, Gull Lakes, Hawk Lakes, Loon Lakes, Moose Lakes, etc., etc. There's a Round Lake, an Oblong Lake, a Crooked Lake and a Narrow Lake, while the hunter is represented by Gun Lake and Long Bow Lake.

In addition there are a number of Lost Lakes which apparently have now been found, but there is still at least one Hidden Lake which many anglers will want to discover.

For the romantically inclined there are several Fairy Lakes available as well as a Sunshine and a Moonshine Lake — of the spiritless variety — and for those who like to begin the day with a smile and a greeting there's Good Morning Lake.

DEPARTMENTAL NOTES

Fishing through the ice has always been a popular pastime in certain districts where facilities are available and the climate not too severe. Even low temperatures do not deter the more enthusiastic, while the "regulars" provide themselves with shacks for shelter and stoves for warmth.

Apparently, however, this form of recreation has received a great stimulus during the past winter especially in the Lake Erie district. A report from the district Overseer at Chippawa gives some interesting information.

Fishing began about January 18th, and from then on large crowds of week-end fishermen have been enjoying excellent sport. A large increase in non-resident visitors is noted and the sale of licenses in the area of Niagara Falls and Fort Erie exceeds any previous sales for this time of the year.

On a recent Sunday the officer estimated that at least 1,000 people were fishing in one area in and about Rose Hill and Windmill Point. The average catch was estimated at 25.

Later, the same officer checked an area of about four miles and estimated the number of fishermen at 2,000 having an average of 10 fish each and a total take of at least 10 tons These figures represent typical weekend crowds. During the week the numbers drop off considerably.

The principal fish taken are blue pickerel and perch with a few sturgeon and the occasional ling. The pickerel are quite plentiful and are taken two or three miles from shore, while the perch are found mostly in the bays.

As the officer remarks this is getting to be "Big Business" and as such will require careful control.

* * * *

Field and Stream has just announced the results of its 1945 angling contest and the Province of Ontario still occupies a prominent place in

the results. The following are the Ontario prize winning fish in order of merit, there being ten prizes in each group:

Brook Trout — Fly Casting

1st Prize —	7 lbs. 12 oz.	Lake Nipigon
4th Prize —	7 lbs. 3 oz.	Lake Nipigon

Brook Trout (Open)

3rd Prize —	7 lbs.	Nipigon River

Rainbow Trout — Fly Casting, Eastern Division

1st Prize —	10 lbs. 4 oz.	St. Mary's Rapids

Smallmouth Bass

2nd Prize —	7 lbs. 12 oz.	Maira Lake
10th Prize —	7 lbs. 6 oz.	Brule Lake

Maskinonge

1st Prize —	58 lbs. 8 oz.	McGregor Bay
4th Prize —	49 lbs.	Rowan Lake
6th Prize —	44 lbs. 12 oz.	Lake of the Woods
8th Prize —	43 lbs. 8 oz.	Big Vermillion Lake
9th Prize —	42 lbs. 4 oz.	Lake of the Woods
10th Prize —	42 lbs.	French River

Northern Pike

5th Prize —	30 lbs. 15 oz.	Lake Dubourne
7th Prize —	27 lbs. 12 oz.	Sioux Narrows
8th Prize —	27 lbs. 7 oz.	Sioux Lookout
9th Prize —	27 lbs.	French River

Walleyed Pike (Pickerel)

1st Prize —	16 lbs. 8 oz.	Sioux Lookout
7th Prize —	13 lbs. 4 oz.	York River

Lake Trout

1st Prize —	43 lbs.	Anishinabi Lake
6th Prize —	30 lbs. 8 oz.	Sioux Lookout
8th Prize —	28 lbs.	Papiniau Lake
10th Prize —	25 lbs. 4 oz.	Devils Lake

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Apparently eleven different divisions were open to Ontario anglers — resident and non-resident — and in five of these, fish from provincial waters were first prize winners. Twenty-two prizes in all were secured which represents 20% of the total. This is nothing new for Ontario but it emphasizes the fact that in our fishing resources are to be found both quality and variety.

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That big 58 lbs. 8 oz. prize muskie taken in McGregor Bay received some appropriate newspaper mention the other day and it was referred to

as a world's record fish. We congratulate the winner, but in order to keep the records straight it is pointed out that the world's record fish — 62 lbs. 8 oz. — is claimed by Michigan, this monster having been taken in Lake St. Clair in 1940. There are at least two Ontario fish which surpass in weight the 1945 prize winner, viz., a 61 lb. 9 oz. specimen taken in 1940 in Cliff Lake, and the previous world's record fish weighing 60 lb. 8 oz. taken in Eagle Lake in 1939. If you are looking for big fish note the places mentioned but don't pass up any of the popular waters. There may be a prize-winner lurking in your favourite fishing hole.

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As a result of the early spring break-up and the comparatively mild weather which has existed for several weeks the Open Season for speckled trout, brown trout and rainbow trout has been advanced. Opening day this year will be Good Friday, April 19th, instead of May 1st.

The general season for bass and maskinonge will open on June 29th, instead of July 1st.

In the River St. Clair, Lake St. Clair, Detroit River and Lake Erie opening date for bass and maskinonge will be June 22nd, instead of June 25th.

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Arrangements have been made to begin a campaign of destruction against the lamprey eel in the waters of Lake Huron, Georgian Bay and the North Channel. This parasite has become well established in the waters named and commercial fishermen are inclined to blame it for much of the decline in lake trout and other fish. The Department has information tending to show that it is at least a serious menace. The lamprey is of no economic value while the species upon which it preys are important to the commercial fishermen.

Half a dozen spawning sites on the North Shore will be attacked this spring during the spawning season. Special nets have been constructed to trap the eels, and these will be under the supervision of an experienced officer.

The experiment should enable the Department to obtain valuable data on the abundance of this aquatic pest.

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Reports reaching us at the time of writing indicate that the smelt are running freely in many of the creeks entering Lake Ontario. Young and old in large numbers, and provided with a wide variety of home-made nets, traps and scoops for taking them have been milling around the mouths of the creeks for days, while the evening sessions have provided excitement galore for all those taking part in this early spring fishing. The catches have been heavy and many have been disposing of their surplus fish at good prices.

PRE-SEASON THOUGHTS

The snow now is melting, and rain-drops are pelting,
Spring is at last drawing near,
Warm winds now come winging, with them green leaves bringing,
And the very best time of the year.

I no longer gripe, but relax with my pipe,
And dream of the days which are nigh
When I'll leave for the stream, no longer a dream,
And tempt Mr. Trout with a fly.

The birds will be singing, the air will be ringing
With spring sounds so vibrant and shrill,
I'll get out my tackle, my rod and my hackle,
And proceed to the stream for a thrill.

Once I get there, I'll abandon all care,
And fan my wee fly in the breeze,
Then I'll cast with some grace, to a well chosen place,
Neath the bows of the o'erhanging trees.

Mr. Trout may be sure that my fly is a lure,
And restrain from the impulse to strike,
Or again he may feel in the mood for a meal,
And give me a whale of a fight.

Either way I'm content, for the time is well spent,
There will be other days I can spare,
When perhaps I can creel with my rod and my reel,
The answer to a fisherman's prayer.

John R. Thompson
in
"Pennsylvania Angler".